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SIPDIS

STATE FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT SUPPORT and EUR/WE
TREASURY FOR DO/IM
JOINT STAFF FOR J-5/EUR
DHS FOR FEMA/OIA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TFUS01: UPDATE ON FRENCH REACTION TO HURRICANE KATRINA

REFS: A) STATE 163366 B) State 164135 C) STATE 164429

D) Paris 5995 E) Paris 6026

1. SUMMARY: This is an action request, see para 14. France is still willing to provide further assistance, but awaits word from the USG as what else might be provided. The Ambassador, DCM, and other Embassy officials have publicly expressed thanks per ref B. END SUMMARY.

FRENCH GOVERNMENT OFFERS

2. We have passed latest general acceptance cable to the GOF (ref C). France continues to offer additional assistance, specifically 20 to 30,000 MREs. These are located in Paris with the French Ministry of Defense, and are available for delivery within the next 2-3 days. They can be flown using available Air France cargo space, meaning preferred destinations would be Houston or Atlanta. Other arrangements could be made if another destination is better, such as Little Rock, but that could entail a delay of up to 5 days in delivery. One MRE contains 2 meals, with a caloric value of 3200 calories. The total weight of the shipment would be 48 tons for the 30000 MREs.

3. France also has offered help with diving teams and the use of a tugboat. We understand the Department will shortly send a message on formal acceptance, and we will immediately relay the message to the MFA upon receipt.

4. Our matrix on the status of French assistance, to date, is as follows:

143	tents 25m2	Accepted & sent 9/6
146	tents 13m3	Accepted & sent 9/6
200	tents 16 m2	Accepted & sent 9/6
98	tents 8 m2	Accepted & sent 9/6
2	tents hangar 86 m2	Accepted & sent 9/6
980	camp cots	Accepted & sent 9/6
1000	pliable jerricans	Accepted & sent 9/6
1100	buckets 11 liters	
3136	soapbars (Marseille)	
576	cooking kits	Accepted & sent 9/6
30	generator 2.5kwa	Accepted
9	generator 4.2 kwa	Accepted
20	generator 4kva LX4000	Accepted
350	Crstyl (water-purifier)	
126	first aid kits	
1029	tarps 8x6	Accepted & sent 9/6
1200	tarps 5x4	Accepted & sent 9/6
1000	blankets	Accepted & sent 9/6
200	stretchers	
6	rope	
1	water treatment station	
2	water treatment station	
10	motorpumps 36m3/h Honda	
20	motorpump 36m3/h SDMO	
4	concrete mixers	
394	storm lamps	
159	masonry kits	
192	carpentry kits	
295	plumbing kits	
6	portable electric tools	
30	chainsaws+gloves+ safety hats	
300	pick axes	
223	shovels	
180	sledgehammers	
3000	ponchos (15 cartons)	
234	Boots (US sizes 9/10/11)	
1000	MREs	Accepted & sent 9/7
20-30000	MREs	

PRIVATE ASSISTANCE

5. The French Red Cross made 12 logistical experts available to the US Red Cross.

6. The NGO Telecom Sans Frontiers sent a team to Houston on

September 5 via commercial air to help restore telephone and communication links.

17. Air France informed us on September 6 that it is prepared to make cargo capacity available for French humanitarian relief shipments to the U.S. Air France has frequent service to Atlanta and Houston, for example.

18. Representatives from the international oil company Total informed the Ambassador on September 6 that Total is pledging a donation of USD 1 million to the US Red Cross.

19. We have received innumerable offers of assistance from private French citizens, and are directing them to appropriate organizations in the US.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

10. On September 3, Ambassador Stapleton conducted an interview about the hurricane with Le Parisien, the largest circulation (500,000) daily paper in Paris. The interview, along with a photo of the Ambassador, appeared last Saturday. On September 8, per guidance provided ref B, the Ambassador held a well-attended press conference to thank the GOF and the people of France for the aid that they have provided to date. More than 20 journalists attended, and the results were immediate and positive. Beginning last night with the AP and AFP wire services stories, five radio stations, a cable news TV station, and daily center-right newspaper Le Figaro all carried features based on the Ambassador's press conference remarks.

11. The DCM gave a live morning drive-time radio interview on September 6, emphasizing the resilience of the US and our thanks for French pledges of assistance.

12. Le Monde (center-left national daily) will publish Ambassador Stapleton's 9/11 anniversary op-ed in its Sunday-Monday weekend edition. Entitled "Adversity and Friendship," the op-ed draws parallels between France's supportive response after 9/11 to its similar support and solidarity in Hurricane Katrina's wake.

13. We will continue to seize other opportunities for public and media outreach to reiterate our messages.

14. ACTION REQUESTED: Please provide further guidance on French offers of assistance, in particular the 20 to 30000 MREs.
STAPLETON#